

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Giant Snacks, LLC

North Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Job Instruction Training Program Plants Successful Seeds at Giant Snacks, LLC

Client Profile:

Giant Snacks, LLC, a family-owned business located in Wahpeton, North Dakota is known for its Giants Sunflower Seeds, promoted as the biggest sunflower seeds on the market. The company was founded in 1958 and employs 10 people.

Situation:

As part of Giant Snacks continuous improvement program, it was concluded that a more structured training program would be a benefit to the organization. Because Giant Snacks relies heavily on a multi-functional, cross-trained workforce, they wanted to make a significant reduction in the learning curve for both new employees as well as cross-training of existing employees. The company turned to the North Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Dakota MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

Solution:

Dakota MEP led Giant Snacks employees through the continuous improvement process to determine where training fit into their program. It was determined that the Job Instruction Training module of Training within Industry (TWI) would benefit the company. TWI is designed to provide a framework for employees to succeed in applying Lean Principles into their daily work life. The program is three-fold, consisting of Job Methods, Job Instruction and Job Relations. Job Methods instructs supervisors on how to best use people, machines and materials to improve how jobs are done. Job Instruction focuses on quickly training employees to complete jobs correctly, safely and conscientiously. Finally, Job Relations helps supervisors build positive employee relations, increase cooperation and satisfaction, and effectively resolve conflicts. Dakota MEP trained packaging line employees in the four-step Job Instruction method, including how to break down jobs and how to prepare a training timetable. Standard work was created through breaking down the jobs and creating digital photographs of critical processes. After each breakdown was completed, employees were brought together to form consensus on how to do the job, resulting in every person doing the job in a similar manner and ultimately stabilizing Giant Snacks' processes.

Results:

- * Realized \$10,000 in cost savings.
- * Improved film waste by 63 percent.
- * Reduced learning curve for new employees by 66 percent.

Testimonial:

"Employees feel the new training program gives them a better opportunity to get to know new employees on a personal/professional level enabling them to know when they are ready to advance to

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the next level of training. Statistically, we went from a 6-8 month training curve down to 6-8 weeks. This is a huge improvement and it shows in the attitudes of new employees and their knowledge of the job at hand. I am very pleased with how this turned out for the company and all the employees involved in this program."

Al Engstrom, Plant Manager